



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

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PSSB Weekly Highlights

- In case you missed it, the *Heard Across Montana* (HAM) newsletter is moving to a **bi-weekly** publication schedule, meaning it will be published every other Friday. **So, you may expect your next issue on Fri., Oct. 7.**
- PSSB is available to assist agencies in the conversion of their FCC licenses to cover narrowband requirements, free of charge. For more information, please contact Julia Noland at jnoland@mt.gov/406-444-0162 or Scott Bradford at sbradford@mt.gov/406-444-2782.
- The FEMA Grants Program Directorate has completed its review and approved the Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) project descriptions for the microwave and radio installations at the Antelope Butte site in Richland County and the Belle Prairie site in Dawson County.
- The Montana Highway Patrol (MHP) Dispatch Center at Fort Harrison is scheduled to have trunking capabilities added the week of Oct. 3. This upgrade will not only connect the dispatch center to the master controller site in Lewis & Clark County, but will also enable MHP to start utilizing trunked resources around the state.
- MHP technicians have been diligently replacing legacy wideband repeaters around the state. Plans are to replace a total of 35 repeaters with narrowband ones.

Save the Dates for the Montana APCO Conference in Kalispell

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Montana APCO Chapter invites all public safety personnel to its annual conference in Kalispell at the Red Lion Inn on Oct. 12-13. This conference promises to be the most exciting yet with another appearance from Immediate Past APCO International President Bill Carrow.

Award nominations for outstanding public safety performers of the year are being accepted through Mon., Sept. 26. Forms are located on the chapter website at www.mtapco.org and are to be submitted to Lecia Kelly at lkelly@chouteaucosomt.com. Westek

Marketing is again sponsoring cash prizes for winners in each category. The categories are: Public-Safety Communications Line Supervisor, Information Technologist, Radio Technologist, Telecommunicator, Trainer, and Manager/Director.



The conference will offer many training tracks for dispatchers, administrators and technical personnel, including a presentation about Pro-Chrt, the Professional Communications Human Resources Taskforce report on challenges facing 9-1-1 public safety communications professionals. PSSB personnel will give presentations on new changes to the 2011 Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual and dispatcher training on wireless call taking.

In addition, APCO's training program certification, based on APCO's Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators (PST)—formerly known as P33—will be presented at this year's conference. Also expect an update on the 20-year retirement legislation, results of the 2011 legislative vote, and preparation for the 2013 legislature. Networking opportunities will be abundant, and vendors will be on hand to show participants the newest in technological solutions.

For more information please contact Kimberly Burdick at kburdick@chouteaucosomt.com or call at 406-622-5451.

I-15/90 Corridor Interoperability Consortium Covers Wide Range of Topics

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Members of the I-15/90 Corridor Consortium met Thurs., Sept. 15 after a summer hiatus. Project Director Dave McPherson reported that federal grant funds previously awarded to Interoperability Montana (IM) have all been de-obligated back to the Montana Dept. of Disaster and Emergency Services (DES).

A Transition Executive Team was appointed by the Governor with representatives from the Montana Departments of Justice, Transportation, and Administration/SITSD. Also appointed were Gallatin County Sheriff Jim Cashell, Lewis and Clark County Sheriff Leo Dutton, and the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff Sheena Wilson. The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), Carl Hotvedt, provides direct

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support to the Executive Team. The team is reviewing and recommending applications the State Administrative Agency (DES) to re-obligate grant funds to local jurisdictions.

Wing Spooner, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB), gave an overview of the grants that have been assumed by Richland and Yellowstone Counties that are intended to complete infrastructure and microwave projects in eastern Montana.

Dave reported that the I-15/90 grant application for FY11 DHS funds was not funded. Members discussed the possibility of applying for some of the needed dispatch equipment via the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, whose deadline was just extended to Fri., Sept. 23.

Tom Dunne, Dunne Communications, brought members up to date on the results of site walks that were recently conducted on the PSIC grant-funded Southwest Loop microwave project. Sites are built, equipment is installed and a lot of testing has taken place. A few punch list items remain to be addressed, and they should be completed soon.

Scott Marsh, Beaverhead County, reported that the Ellis Peak communications site got hit by lightning sometime in July, severely damaging ODU units and the meter base. Despite having chemical ground rods and a grounding ring, evidently, the power service had not been grounded correctly to the R-56 requirement. With the help of Beaverhead County Public Works and Vigilante Electric, the site is up and running again. Scott also indicated that he has been contacted by a number of federal agencies who want to locate equipment in county communications sites, which will assist the county in covering utility costs.

Members discussed the possibility of obtaining a combiner for the Red Mountain site, and they learned that Verizon has erected its new tower at Rumsey Mountain. It is in the process of assembling a new block building to house its equipment. Once its equipment is re-located, more space will be available in the existing shelter that will be used exclusively by public safety entities.

The next consortium meeting will be Thurs., Nov. 17 at the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St., beginning at 10:00 am.

NIST Seeks Input on Broadband R&D Priorities

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

On Sept. 12, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) released a Federal Register Notice soliciting comment on research and development priorities for a new nationwide interoperable public safety broadband network. NIST will use the input to help develop research and

development priorities in anticipation of the President's Wireless Innovation (WIN) Fund—specifically, the \$500 million the President requested for the Public Safety Innovation Fund (PSIF).

The notice lists numerous public safety communications features and requirements related to resiliency; reliability and availability; security; and affordability/commercial alignment. NIST is seeking input on the importance of these to the public safety community and asks for assistance in identifying current gaps that are preventing the full realization of these features. In addition, comments are sought on possible research and development that could take place to close technical gaps, challenges in realizing the full potential of these requirements, and industry best practices that could be leveraged to expedite public safety's realization of these key features.

NIST also seeks to understand the extent to which public safety needs can be satisfied through existing commercially available technology or through technology that could become available in the relative short-term. NIST intends to capture and address public safety's needs beyond what can be provided by the current generation of broadband technology and will work to drive technological progress in that direction.

Comments are due by 5:00 pm on Oct. 12 to Dereck Orr at dereck.orr@nist.gov. Here is the link to access a PDF of the Federal Register Notice: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-09-12/pdf/2011-23180.pdf>. Or, for the HTML version, visit this link: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-09-12/html/2011-23180.htm>.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Tues., Sept. 27: State Agency Radio Users Task Force**
Helena • 3:00-4:30 pm
Mitchell Building, 125 S. Roberts, Rm. 160
- **Thurs., Oct. 6: Northern Tier Consortium**
Havre • 11:00 am-1:30 pm
Hill County Detention Center Courtroom Mtg. Area
1450 2nd St. West
- **Tues., Oct. 11: Regional Broadband Meeting**
In partnership with: Lake County Community Development; 407 Main Street SW
Ronan • 1:00-5:00 pm
- **Wed., Oct. 12: Regional Broadband Meeting**
In partnership with: Bitterroot Economic Development District; Location to Be Announced
Missoula • 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
For more info.: <http://broadband.mt.gov/events.aspx>
- **Thurs., Oct. 12-13: MT Chapter APCO Conference**
Kalispell • Red Lion Inn, 20 N. Main St.
Call 1-800-RED-LION (1-800-733-5466) or visit www.REDLION.com for reservations.
Discount conference registration ends Oct. 1
Visit: <http://www.mtapco.org/> for more information